

# VIDEO AGE

international

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## LAM Local Production: Opportunity For Growth

BY DOM SERAFINI

Latin America is known for its telenovelas, which are successfully exported within and outside the region both in finished form and as formats. But another form of production has now reached critical mass: Versions of U.S. series produced exclusively for a particular Latin territory or for a pan-regional network.

All U.S. studios have jumped on the LAM local production bandwagon and mini-majors, such as FremantleMedia and A+E, are in pursuit. LAM local productions are so successful that studios are now exporting them into other regions. For example, in Turkey a local version of *Desperate Housewives* is currently on the air.

Elie Wahba, SVP Latin America & Caribbean for 20th Century Fox Distribution,

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"It's the new set for our telenovela"

## Summit Focuses on Telenovelas' Future

The talk was about telenovelas and where they're heading, and the hope was that the genre would continue to be the main programming staple of the Latin networks well into the future.

That's how the ninth annual *Cumbre Mundial de la Industria de la Telenovela y Series de Ficción*, or Telenovela Summit, began and ended early last month at the JW Marriott in Miami, Florida.

Organized by the indomitable Amanda Ospina, publisher and editor of the Miami-based *TV Mas* magazine, the *Cumbre* registered some 150 Latin TV executives from the U.S., Latin America and Europe.

Over a three-day period, some 33 panelists touched on subjects such as licensing and merchandising, Hispanic (Spanish-language viewers in the U.S.) audiences, acquisitions and scriptwriting, among other topics. Disney's Leonardo Aranguibel spoke about co-productions and adaptations in Latin America, Telemundo Network's Leonor Sotillo touched on the subject of Web channels, Ecuavisa's Ana Cecilia Alvarado discussed the power of drama series in Ecuador, Telefutura's German Perez-

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## Miami Success Brings Added Costs To NATPE Exhibitors

BY ERIN SOMERS

As early as last month, the cards were dealt for NATPE 2012. The Tresor Tower at the Fontainebleau Hotel, the market's site in Miami Beach, Florida, will house fewer exhibitors and only one of the major U.S. studios, thus greatly alleviating the past elevator problems by reducing the number of people using them. The next challenge for the NATPE organizers is to reduce the waiting time for valet parking at the Fontainebleau, bringing it down from a 60-plus minute wait to

a more tolerable 15-20 minutes. One suggestion is to move the overflow to the adjacent Eden Roc Hotel.

Set to kick off January 23-25, the Latin-focused event will return to the

(Continued on Page 22)

## ATF's Latin Presence Is Drastically Declining

*But the market is still viable*

BY SARA ALESSI

After Eastern Europe, the Asian marketplace became a boom for Latin American television companies, and they responded in kind by flooding Singapore's Asia TV Forum (ATF). However, with the region increasingly closing off to telenovelas, Latin

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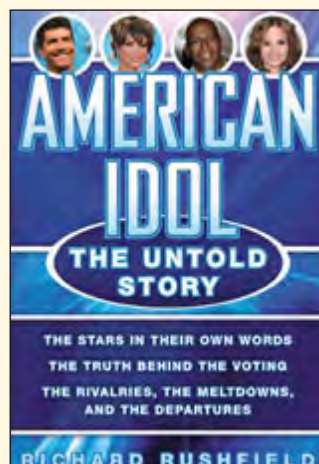
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## Game Makers' Big Tax Breaks

**A**ccording to the Joint Committee on Taxation, in 2010, the United States federal government handed out \$123 billion in tax incentives to various corporations. Among the companies that took advantage of the U.S. government tax incentives were

those that manufacture video games.

In fact, video game production is now one of the most highly subsidized businesses in the U.S. due to these very same tax incentives, because companies that develop video games have their hands in a number of cookie jars: software development, the entertainment industry and online retailing, making them eligible for combined tax incentives.

Even though the U.S. video game industry didn't exist until the early 1970s, in 1954, Congress rewrote the tax code to

include a tax break that allowed companies to deduct immediately all laboratory-based research and experimentation costs. The government expanded the tax break in 1969 so that corporations could also deduct the cost of software development. These tax breaks now apply to video game makers, especially since most of their costs fall under the category of software development.

Plus, in 1981, the U.S. Congress created an additional credit intended for companies that increased their research and development activities. Thus, even though the type of research and development implemented by video game developers rarely benefits anyone besides the company itself, these companies still qualify for the tax deduction.

And tax incentives are spreading. Currently, over 20 states dangle tax breaks in front of video game manufacturers to encourage them to

take root within the state.

Like the U.S., Canada is offering big subsidies, too, hoping to lure video game companies over the U.S.-Canadian border. Montreal offers these companies a tax credit equal to 37.5 percent of their payroll. Reportedly, Ontario provided one video game company a tax incentive of over C\$321,000 to relocate from the U.S.

## More TV Sets In Polish HH

**A**ccording to the results of a survey by London-based TGI Millward Brown, the number of television sets in Polish homes is growing. The survey indicates that over five million Polish households (HH) have at least two television sets. This translates to 38 percent of all households, or 5.3 million households, with more than one television.

Additionally, one million households in Poland have three or more TVs, a figure that has nearly doubled in the past 10 years. In 2001, there were only 700,000 Polish homes with three or more TV sets. Now, the number has climbed to 1,207,080 households.

Not only is the number of TV sets in Polish HH growing, but the size of TV screens is increasing as well. More than four million households have sets with panels that are 30 inches (76.2 cm) or larger, and according to Nielsen Audience Measurement Polska data for 2010, 33 percent of all TV sets in Poland are flat LCD TVs.

It is also significant that TVs are now being kept in rooms other than the living room, as more than one million households have additional TV sets located in bedrooms and kitchens.

## Argentina's Second FyMTI

**T**he second iteration of the International TV Fiction Festival and Market, or the *Festival y Mercado de TV-Ficción Internacional* (FyMTI) was held November 25-27 at the InterContinental Hotel Nordelta, Tigre, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Organized by Sergio Crescenzi and Ruben Nieves, owners of FyMTI, an active member of Argentinean Audiovisual Exporters Chamber, there are three main elements to the event: The Festival (the Official Competition, premieres and launches, tributes, etc.), the Market (business meetings and workshops) and the Forum (conferences, debates, master classes and presentations). The event is dedicated to broadcast TV, pay-TV, digital TV, web TV and IPTV content, formats and production services, and offers audiovisual screenings, business meetings, a forum and awards ceremony.





# THE AMAZING RACE

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Disney Media Networks  
LATIN AMERICA





(Continued from Page 4)

The market's objective is to emphasize the value of TV drama, to reward quality products and to promote co-production. Argentina is considered one of the world's largest producers and exporters of TV content and formats, airing TV shows in 80 countries, and having sold 40,000 hours of programming in the past year. Argentina's audiovisual industry consists of more than 410 companies.

FyMTI provides attendees with the chance to test pilots and launch new shows, present co-production projects,

broker deals, get up-to-date with industry trends and more.

This year's event featured 100 drama titles, 15 conferences, 90 business meetings, 50 accredited journalists and 50 guest speakers from Latin America, the U.S., Europe and Asia for a total of 500 attendees.

## Filipino Plus TV in Europe

**O**wing to the launch of Filipino Plus from Orbit Showtime Network (OSN) and TV2MORO, premium and exclusive content from the Philippines will now be available to the Filipino community in Europe as a pay-TV entertainment package.

Six video channels and two radio channels will be featured as part of the Filipino Plus TV entertainment package. The channels — Kapatid TV5, Aksyon TV, GMA Pinoy TV, GMA Life TV, Pinoy Extreme, M&L TV, DZBB and DWLS-FM — will show a broad spectrum of content including sports, variety shows, movies, and radio channels.

"We're delighted to be doing this with TV2Moro, which is a successful IPTV platform in the U.S. dealing with ethnic channels," said Emad Morcos, OSN's vice president Strategic & Business Development. "This is an extension of their business and our relationship with them. The distribution will be right across Europe focusing on Scandinavia and Western Europe," he added.

The programming will be delivered via IPTV, which requires only a broadband connection and the Filipino Plus IPTV

set-top box, which is provided gratis with subscription to the package. Filipino Plus will be available via Filipino dealers in various European cities.



TV2Moro's CEO Elie Kawakabani and OSN's vice president Strategic & Business Development Emad Morcos

## SPORTEL Raced Through Monaco

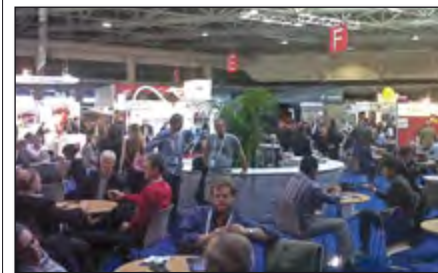
**A**mparo DiFede, recently appointed administrative director of Monaco's Sportel, declared the 22nd annual sports market a great success. According to DiFede, this year 2,330 participants from 970 companies, representing 67 countries took part. This translates to a 10 percent increase in participation over 2010, making 2011 the biggest market in 10 years. The participants filled the Grimaldi Forum with 183 stands, representing a 30 percent increase in floor space.

Organized by Monaco Principality's Medias, the market kicked off on October 10.

A variety of events were packed into the four-day convention, including a symposium examining the following question: "Smart TV: Added Value for Sport?" In anticipation of the 2012 Summer Olympic Games in London, international conference "Olympic Games – The Lean Forward Revolution in Sports" looked into how leading sports broadcasters are innovating by making content omnipresent on various consumer devices and platforms and by creating sports services that complement the television broadcast. Another notable event was the press event titled, "World Judo Championships, Paris 2011 and Its Media Coverage."

The Georges Bertellotti Golden Podium Awards honored directors of the world's best sports TV images. This year, the jury for the awards ceremony included writer director Régis Wargnier, sailor Olivier de Kersauson, sailor Philippe Monnet, F1 consultant Patrick Tambay and cyclist champion Alexandre Vinokourov.

SPORTEL will host its next market March 12-14, 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and will return to Monte Carlo in October.



# ALWAYS ready



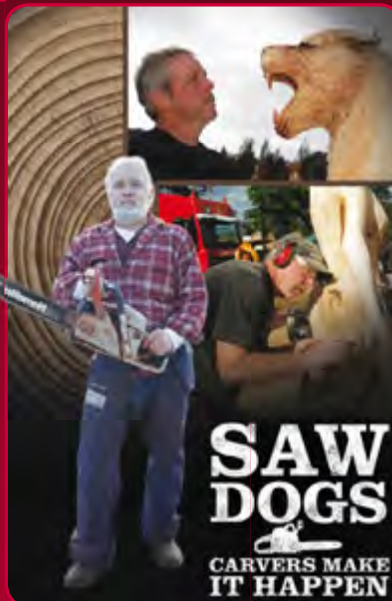
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## The Secrets Of *American Idol*: Gossip Is An Added Bonus

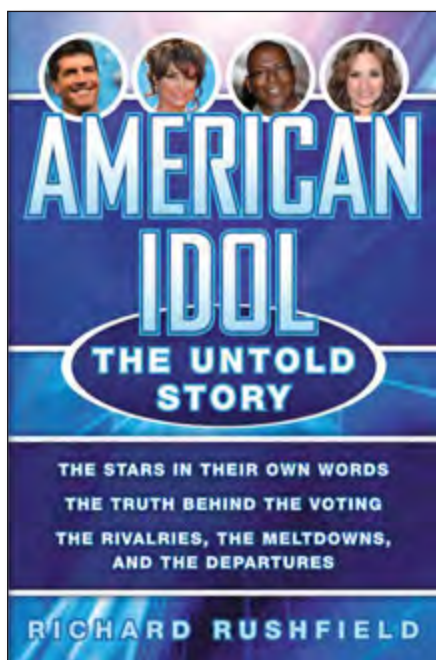
Since it first hit America's TV airwaves in 2002, FOX's *American Idol*, an adaptation of FremantleMedia's *Pop Idol* in the U.K., established itself as an empire, currently attracting an average of 25.2 million U.S. viewers per episode.

Reporter Richard Rushfield, who covered the reality singing competition show for the *Los Angeles Times* for three years, and continues to write about *Idol* for *The Daily Beast*, explores the phenomenon of *American Idol* in his new book from Hyperion, *American Idol: The Untold Story* (267 pages, \$24.99).

Rushfield starts at the very beginning of the *Idol* story by providing background on creator Simon Fuller, a talent manager and TV producer. He then offers an overview of each of the seasons, reminds readers of the many amusing singer-turned-judge Paula Abdul incidents and describes life in the "Bubble" for *Idol* contestants who are cut off from family, friends and the rest of the world during their *Idol* runs.

Naturally, quintessential "nasty judge" and co-producer Simon Cowell, a record executive, is a topic of discussion. Rushfield also dedicates an entire chapter titled *The Exile* to former co-host, Brian Dunkleman, who caused a stir after leaving a show as popular as *Idol*. Plus, Rushfield explores *Idol*'s so-called public enemy number one, Dave Della Terza, who launched the "Vote for the Worst" website, which encourages *Idol*'s detractors to vote for contestants the website deems to be the least talented, and perhaps the strangest.

The author sets about telling the "untold story" by sharing comments from former *Idol* contestants, illustrating his involvement with the show and its participants. In the book's more fiery moments, the reader learns firsthand from contestants what it felt like to be critiqued by Cowell, who once told a singer, "You're a beautiful girl, but you're ugly when you perform." Season two competitor Kimberley Locke recalls that it was vital for contestants to learn "how



to compartmentalize Simon because...if you don't learn how to compartmentalize him it will freak you out."

The reader also gets the inside story from those involved with *Idol* behind the scenes. For instance, stage manager Debbie Williams divulges that season five winner Taylor Hicks "would come to me secretly sometimes" with special routines he wanted to use in the show, but didn't want to give away during rehearsal. This information is intriguing to true *Idol* fans, as it's something they likely wouldn't have known if not for Rushfield's book.

At times, Rushfield inserts himself into the narrative, further emphasizing his proximity to *Idol*. Toward the end of the book, he reveals that when Abdul's contract was up for renewal in 2009, he himself was contacted by David Sonenberg, the head of Abdul's management team, who called to express frustration with the fact that Abdul's salary remained miniscule compared to that of Cowell. Any doubts about Rushfield's *Idol* knowledge and clout are erased at this moment. Abdul's team would never have leaked this story to Rushfield if he weren't considered a key chronicler of *Idol* happenings.

Further demonstrating his familiarity with the show and the news surrounding

it, Rushfield cites reputed general news and entertainment news sources throughout the book, proving that he is well read on the topic, and dedicated to the news surrounding it. His use of quotes and headlines from newspapers and magazines reawakens the urgency of particular events for the reader, who might remember what it was like when Tamara Gray, season one's frontrunner, was unexpectedly eliminated. Recreating the controversy, Rushfield reprints the *New York Post* headline, "New Idol Boot a Shocker," and an excerpt from the *Toronto Star*'s story about "outraged cries for vengeful boycotts and petitions" against Gray's elimination.

However, despite the fact that the author includes quotes from those involved in the show and claims to be telling the "untold story," the reader should question whether Rushfield is actually telling the "untold story" or whether he is, throughout most of the book, merely recounting what many devoted *Idol* fans already know — especially since he often quotes stories that have already been covered by the media.

For instance, Rushfield quotes an article from *US Weekly* stating that *Idol* was considering singer Jessica Simpson and others as possible replacements for Abdul. This is not news to many *Idol* fans. It's also hard to believe that no one knew about the "What is Paula on?" drama that resulted from her disorganized critiques of the *Idol* performers and other offstage incidents — such as contestant Corey Clark's claim that he and Abdul were involved in a romantic relationship — or the detailed accounts Rushfield provides about each season of the show.

On the front cover, the book is billed as one that tells the story of *Idol* through "the stars in their own words," but even though Rushfield includes quotes from various *Idol* contestants, he fails to include the insights of *Idol*'s more well known contestants (i.e. the winners or other popular contestants), which would have made the book far more interesting. In fact, Rushfield misleads the reader into thinking he'll share the views of *Idol*'s biggest stars within the body of his work by including a

quote from season four winner Carrie Underwood in the book's epigraph. This is the last the reader sees of Underwood's direct words.

One of the book's strengths lies in Rushfield's dedication to the topic, *American Idol*, which becomes clear immediately in the Acknowledgements section, when Rushfield calls working with the show his "rendezvous with destiny." As could be expected from Rushfield's enthusiasm, he explores the *Idol* gossip and drama in a serious manner that could only be appreciated by a true fan of the show. Indeed, the cover boasts that the book deals with "the rivalries, the meltdowns, and the departures," playing into the drama associated with *Idol*, and drawing the attention of its viewers.

However, his fan status is also a detrimental weakness. While the author's enthusiastic tone underscores his devotion to *American Idol*, it is also, at times, far too sentimental for a book about a reality television singing competition. He writes that the fact that Jennifer Hudson (who finished eighth in season three) won an Academy Award, and that other finalists have made successful albums, is proof that, "all the contenders who took part in this annual adventure had won a place in the nation's heart." He implies that *Idol* viewers — and apparently even non-*Idol* viewers — are so enamored with the competition and its contestants that they'll embrace those who did not win. Even the last paragraph of the book is dripping with sentimentality, with its hopeful look toward the future: "Somewhere in one of those crowds [of people waiting to audition for *Idol*], lined up into the distance before sunrise, there may have stood the person who would change the show...and keep the dream alive for yet another generation of dreamers."

Perhaps the most shocking depiction of the author's overzealous tone is when he describes *Idol* as "The country's most beloved pastime." In making such a bold statement, Rushfield gives the show too much gravitas and asks too much of the reader: it's difficult to swallow the idea that a singing competition could hold this title, which, historically, belongs to the national pastime, baseball.

When Richard Rushfield sat down to write this book, he was, undoubtedly, writing for *American Idol* fans much like himself. While the book is lively and informs readers about the show, it's unlikely to hold the interest of anyone but the most devoted fans.

Nevertheless, for fans looking to relive past moments, and for those who don't watch the show but want to see what they've missed, Rushfield's book is a good place to turn. **SA** ●



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## Cannes Finds TV No Longer In A Defensive Posture

*Latin America imposes its presence*

Let's start by stating that last October's MIPCOM in Cannes, France, was successful due to great audiovisual content sales. No TV trade show can be successful without the "sales" element, no matter how exuberant the associated conferences and special events may be. Then, it's by fortuitous coincidence that MIPCOM's peripheral activities were also appealing. Even the weather complemented the great event with sunny, hot, summer-like market days, which contributed to an upbeat mood and the overall triumph of the market.

And with such accolades this feature may have said it all already, if it weren't for the numerous details still left to report.

Starting with conferences: The fortunate few who actually found time to participate had an array of timely subjects from which to choose.

Disney's co-chairman Anne Sweeney spoke about the fact that "digital didn't weaken the power of television, it unleashed it," adding that, "television is the medium around which all others revolve."

Kevin Reilly, president of Entertainment at FOX Broadcasting, spoke about creativity in television and how he uses social networks to preview new shows. Expanding on Sweeney's



Disney Media Networks Latin America's Leonardo Aranguibel, Gustavo Sorotski, Jack Morera, Fernando Barbosa, Fabiola Bovino, Henri Ringel

statement, he said, "New technology revolves around TV products... It turns out that the next big thing is going to include the same old big thing: TV." Earlier, Reilly told *VideoAge* Daily that television is "not in a defensive posture anymore."

Then, Mark Teitell from DECE, the UltraViolet (UV) consortium, and Warner Bros.' Justin Herz explained the UV digital delivery "cloud" as a system by which consumers can view content without the constraints of physical media, location, TV display and time.

Ted Sarandos, CCO of Netflix, was also on hand. Netflix is causing

a stir with its \$100 million original production *House of Cards*, starring Kevin Spacey, to compensate for the fact that companies such as "HBO and Starz don't really want to sell to us," according to Sarandos, and studios would only sell them library product.

Moving from the conference rooms to the exhibition halls (which were sold out), the first thought that came to mind was how relatively empty the corridors were and by contrast, how crowded the U.S. studios' large tents and expansive floors were. Indeed, both the U.S. studios and mini-majors like FremantleMedia, Starz, eOne and



At MIPCOM's "Personality of the Year" dinner at the Carlton Hotel in Cannes honoring Disney's co-chairman Anne Sweeney: MIPCOM's Anne de Kerckhove, Vanessa Williams, VideoAge's Dom Serafini and Sweeney.

Lionsgate dominated the market in terms of product, traffic, sales and attention.

The fact that all of the key front cover stories in *VideoAge*'s three Dailies at MIPCOM focused on the studios and mini-majors, in addition to the aforementioned conferences, is indicative of the important role they played in the market. The Daily also reported on the rebranding and changing structure of German television's international distribution, the depressed state of television in Italy, the preparations for the NATPE TV market in Miami next January and the imposing presence of the Russian Bear, consisting of a large number of production, distribution and broadcasting companies headed by Channel One Russia. This bear awoke at Focus on Russia with a big roar that included an opening night party, a series of breakfasts, luncheons and conferences in their large Russia House tent, plus a closing party, which unfortunately conflicted with the MIPCOM "Personality of the Year" soiree. That event honored Disney's Sweeney, the first woman to receive the market's top award.

In addition to the special Russia House, this year's exhibition floor played host to a new China Pavilion, housing 52 Chinese companies and representing a 56 percent increase over last year. Animation companies were

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Record TV's Marcelo Cardoso, Delmar Andrade, Edson Mendes



Telefe's Diana Coifman, Fernando Varela



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(Continued from Page 10)



Reed Midem's Laurine Garaude, Paul Zilk, Russian filmmaker Olga Fon Frantskevich, Channel One Russia's CEO Konstantin Ernst, Ambassador of Russia in France Alexander Orlov, Channel One Russia's Deputy CEO Alexander Fayfman, Vice Consul of Russia in France Alexey Popov, Reed Midem's Ted Baracos.

particularly visible at the Pavilion.

The Daily also covered MIPJunior with a report on the growth of children's television around the world, which offered some contrasting views summarized by the headline: "Kids TV Growth a Sure Maybe."

The strong Latin American presence at MIPCOM crowned it the third most important market after the L.A. Screenings and NATPE. However, in terms of participation, with about 170 companies from 10 countries, MIPCOM drew by far the largest contingent from Latin America, compared to the L.A. Screenings and NATPE combined. But, outside the U.S. studios and other mini-majors' Latin divisions, Latin American indies with booths at MIPCOM numbered 24 from five countries. As for the number of LAM buyers, all studios reported the same number as last year,

about 120 covering all major territories and the pan-regionals.

The stars were out in full force (with approximately 20 showing up on the Croisette), as were a number of executive producers and writers, with Ashley Judd and cast members Cliff Curtis and Adriano Giannini attending the world premiere screening of Disney Media Distribution's drama series *Missing*. Keifer Sutherland also took the stage to promote Fox's *Touch*. The cast of eOne and Endemol's new post-American Civil War drama *Hell On Wheels*, including Anson Mount, Common, Dominique McElligott and Colm Meaney, graced MIPCOM's red carpet and were present at eOne's cocktail party. Fran Drescher, writer, producer and star of *Happily Divorced*, made an appearance on behalf of Endemol as well.



Sony Pictures' Alexander Marin, Angel Orengo, Kevin Byles

Record TV Network's Delmar Andrade had this to say about his company's success at the market: "Even though Europe is passing through a difficult moment regarding its economy, we cannot complain regarding our European customers. We believe that at the end of 2012, the European broadcast market will return to normal." Likewise, SBT's Carolina Scheinberg found that "in the past, we had more meetings, but they resulted in fewer deals. [This year] we found that we had fewer meetings, but the meetings we had turned out more deals," she said.

Caracol's Monica Ramon noted that Caracol met with "Latins, Europeans, Africans, Americans and Asians," and the company brought "a sales agent for each area."

Cesar Diaz at Venevision International stated, "At this market, we focus our attention on the non-Latin world." However, he was quick to add that the company did have appointments with Latin buyers at MIPCOM.

In contrast, RCN Television's Maria Jose Ramos said, "I specifically work with Latin buyers...but there have been fewer Latin buyers here than there are at NATPE." Ramos expressed a desire to see more Latin buyers attend MIPCOM. Although, she mentioned that buyers from Latin American countries such as Chile, Argentina, Perú and Venezuela did attend.

Tomas Darcyl of Telefilms reported, "We came here to see our clients, [which] are Latin American companies," and he conceded that "there are more clients at NATPE, but our biggest clients are [at MIPCOM]." Jose Escalante at Latin Media Corporation summed it up best



Azteca's Raul Mendoza, Carmen Pizano

when he said: "It's been a very busy market."

But, despite this success, MIPCOM is plagued by an ongoing issue with the MIP-TV dates. This Achilles Heel stems from the fact that the U.S. studios are unhappy with the April dates. The studios want MIP-TV to be moved to late February-early March, because, as far as they're concerned, mid-winter is a good mid-season calendar date for U.S. content, Cannes offers the perfect winter break for sellers and buyers alike, and there are no conflicting markets — with the exception of the BBC Screenings, which could easily be moved to April.

If MIP is not receptive to their needs, the studios are contemplating two options: Creating their own localized multi-city mid-winter screenings, or teaming up with NATPE to extend the Miami, Florida market in January to buyers outside the traditional Latin American contingent. Meanwhile, MIP is slowly inching toward March with its 2012 dates set for March 30-April 4.

To conclude, there are the mandatory market figures also used to gauge the success of the trade show compared to previous years: This year there were 12,500 participants representing 4,211 companies from 102 countries and 1,524 booths, with each of the many umbrella groups counting as one booth. This represents an overall growth of four percent compared to MIPCOM 2010. Next year, the market will be held October 8-12. ●



Caracol's Berta Orozco, Roberto Corrente, Monica Ramon



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# Challenges Are Bread And Butter Of Indie Film Biz

**T**he good news: The indie movie business is getting healthier. The bad news: The sick patient is now the AFM, which is considered by many observers to be the world's only marketplace for commercial films. Emblematic of the problems facing AFM is a petition circulating among participants threatening to pull out of the market if it moves from its current location in Santa Monica to downtown Los Angeles.

If, as the saying goes, "business is business," the location should matter very little. However, when a market shows signs of erosion, the three rules of real estate usually apply: Location, location, location.

The NATPE experience proves that location can make all the difference. For that market, participants threatened to pull out if it did not move from its former Las Vegas location. Eventually, NATPE organizers relented and moved the January event to Miami Beach, Florida, where it's thriving once again.

The fact that AFM is struggling could be detected from an unusual letter that Santa Monica Mayor Richard Bloom gave to all AFM participants in their registration bag, extolling the virtues of his town and hoping that they would return. Santa Monica recently lost the Google office to the Venice section of Los Angeles and surely cannot afford to



RAI Sales' Bruce Rabinowitz

lose an event as rich as the AFM, which reportedly brings \$16 million a year in direct spending to the city.

For its part, the AFM is trying to contain increasing cost demands from the Loews Hotel, the market's key exhibition spot. Escalating hotel costs are becoming an issue for many suite-based markets, to the point that some trade show organizers are even asking the press to print negative stories and reports of participants pulling out. Naturally, for Los Angeles-based companies, exhibiting at the AFM is inexpensive compared to overseas trade shows, and even if a few non-U.S. companies decide to skip the AFM because of the undesirable location,

buyers will still flock to the market to scope out American films.

Nevertheless, for now the AFM is seen as the only viable international film market, since Berlin is considered an art-house film market and Toronto is mainly a festival with a small, scattered market. On the other hand, the AFM has a good marketplace despite the fact that it takes place late in the calendar year, following the increasingly successful MIPCOM in Cannes and at the end of the budget cycle.

In addition, the AFM maintains a different business model for distributors. While MIPCOM is seen as a broadcast market, the AFM is more of an "all-rights" market, even playing host to some theatrical business, especially from Russia, as reported by Steve Arroyave of Canada's Arrow Entertainment. Plus, as The Fremantle Corp's Irv Holender stated, AFM is a "pick-up and filler market," meaning that buyers are cherry picking theatrical titles to fill holes in their TV schedules. Others see the AFM as fostering good follow-up negotiations initiated at MIPCOM. However, ACI's Chevonne O'Shaughnessy pointed out that her company will premiere certain film titles at the AFM but not at MIPCOM, because producers want their movies to be associated with what is perceived as a film market rather than a broadcast market. On top of all this, there is the fact that some movie buyers attend AFM and not MIPCOM.

But, even though official figures like to stress that they're on "par with last year," the reality is that, this year, distributors were able to get exhibition suites at the Loews Hotel just a few days prior to the market's opening day on November 2. And even so, a few suites on the second floor of the seven-story Loews Hotel remained empty. This is despite an aggressive marketing campaign that involved the U.S. consulates and embassies in key countries, including Argentina.

Perhaps because the AFM is an appointment-only market, the corridors on the various floors were rather empty. But floor traffic has rarely been a virtue of the AFM, especially considering that buyers have to attend screenings as well, with a total of 415 films on the list.

The smaller number of buyers from Italy, Spain and Greece, which contributed to the poor floor traffic, was more than compensated for by those from China (up 61 percent from 2010) and Germany (up 38 percent). Plus, Japan, a traditional buyer of movies (more so than TV programs) seems to be recuperating from the disasters of this past March, with the prediction that, ultimately for this year, theatrical losses would total only a small percentage compared to 2010. In addition, the strengthening of the yen against the dollar has improved sales to Japan, to the point that, once again, film imports rank above exports. At AFM, acquisition company TWA alone bought six titles for Japan in the first four days of the market.

Other active Asian countries were Thailand, whose government sponsored a Thai Night soiree, and Hong Kong, whose Trade Development Council organized both an umbrella stand for 14 companies and a "Hong Kong Day" on the second day of the market, featuring a series of seminars and a cocktail party.

On the seller side, in contrast to the fewer buyers from Spain, there was a large group of exhibitors under the FAPAE umbrella, the Federation of Spanish audiovisual companies.

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Film Export's Roberto Di Girolamo



Lobby at the Loews Hotel, AFM headquarters  
(Photo by Alexandra Wyman/Getty Images for AFM)



# A CORAZÓN ABIERTO

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**Disney** Media Networks  
LATIN AMERICA



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The Fremantle Corporation's Irv Holender

From Italy, RAI registered without a suite. Bruce Rabinowitz from its New York City sales office was present, while theatrical acquisitions were made by two RAI executives from Rome. In the television sphere, a few of the usual Italian agents that RAI utilizes attended. Mediaset sent only one of its buyers for television, while Mediaset's Medusa Films handled theatrical buying and selling as one of the three Italian exhibitors at the AFM.

In the view of Rome-based Film Export's Roberto Di Girolamo, the emergence of Roma Cinema Fest — which has a small market and is held a few days prior to the AFM — has little to do with Italians not going to Santa Monica. "The problem is," said Di Girolamo, "that Italy no longer produces movies for the international market."

At the AFM, Film Export not only rented a suite, but also filled the trades with ads for its Dario Argento 3D movie *Dracula*. It also booked several screening rooms at nearby theaters; something extremely rare for Italian entertainment companies, which are not known for their marketing savvy.

The fact that the indie film business is becoming more robust (giving the AFM a much-needed insulin injection) is indicated by the flow of money that is returning to the sector with private-equity firms once again active, and approximately seven companies among the most aggressive at the AFM. Banks are also returning to AFM, with some renting suites. The improving business aspect for indie film companies was highlighted at the AFM with a two-part Finance Conference on day three of the eight-day market, at the Fairmont Hotel.

The conference was sold out, with more than 700 attendees — including CEOs, filmmakers, financiers and studio executives — exploring the current state of independent film financing and looking to pinpoint where the money is.

In addition to the aforementioned finance conference, there were pitch seminars, and conferences for production, marketing, agents, packaging, distribution and new platforms, with a total of nine conferences held in a five-day period at the Fairmont Hotel. Plus, there were six "Industry Conversations" with actors, directors, producers and writers held at the Loews. In the view of one exhibitor, with all those seminars and

an associated film festival (the AFI Fest held Nov. 3-10 in Los Angeles), the AFM managed to keep people away from the corridors and suites with so many "distractions" from the business of buying and selling.

Another factor aiding the indie film business is that the U.S. studios have pulled out of international film acquisition in favor of larger projects, leaving the \$50 million business to the independents. On the other hand, big movies tend to lose value on cable, since its window is so far down the road, giving a boost to the lesser-exploited indie features. And this is without counting the increased sales due to new players such as "Incos" (Internet companies like Netflix and Google).

Finally, A-list actors, such as George Clooney, are now betting on indie films for more credibility and international acclaim. And some of Hollywood's biggest stars, like Rob Reiner, are actually participating in the market. Reiner delivered a presentation for the "Industry Conversations" series. ●



"Production, Financing and Distribution of Independent Film" seminar at the Fairmont Hotel. (Photo by Alexandra Wyman/Getty Images for AFM)

## The AFM in Facts & Figures

The American Film Market wrapped up its 2011 edition, seeing an eight percent increase in buying companies from 664 in 2010 to 718 this year. The number of acquisitions executives was also on the rise, climbing seven percent to 1,523 from 1,417. Overall attendance grew by four percent to 7,988 versus 7,695 in 2010.

Countries that sent more individuals from buying companies to the AFM this year included China (+61 percent, 37 vs. 23), Germany (+38 percent, 109 vs. 79), the U.K. (+16 percent, 73 vs. 63), South Korea (+15 percent, 116 vs. 101) and Japan (+11 percent, 128 vs. 115). Regionally, the number of buying companies from the Middle East increased by 35 percent, from 31 to 42; while Asia grew 17 percent, from 348 to 407.

China registered the most growth for buying companies (+50 percent, 21 vs. 14) then Germany (+39 percent, 46 vs. 33) and France (+18 percent, 40 vs. 34). The U.S. increased eight percent from 127 to 137.

There was a four percent increase in exhibiting companies as well (356 vs. 343).



Jean Prewitt, president of IFTA, the AFM organizer; director Rob Reiner and AFM's Managing Director Jonathan Wolf at the "Industry Conversation" held at the Loews. (Photo by Alexandra Wyman/Getty Images for AFM)



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## Telenovelas' Future

(Continued from Cover)

Nahim moderated a seminar on various business models and Latin Media's Jose Escalante presided over talks about production and content supply. An entire day was devoted to scriptwriting, and Cuban-born, Miami-based Delia Fiallo, one of Latin America's most well known telenovela writers, received an award for a prolific career.

Televisa's Martha Zavaleta offered an artistic view of telenovelas at the event, illustrating the need for new actors in the TV sector by comparing a star to a leader. "Nowadays the work schedules of the top actors are absurd and the stars cannot keep up with the pace. This is why the industry needs more stars," she explained. Zavaleta also pointed out that, at times, TV stars lose their leadership roles due to an awkward attitude or troublesome circumstances. Over time, some actors become too passionate on camera, appearing unnatural and unbelievable, she said.

Venevision's Cesar Diaz explained the changing world of international content distribution, touching on the challenges facing telenovela sales internationally. After Europe — first Western Europe and later Eastern Europe — then moving to countries such as Romania and Russia, telenovela sales boomed in Asia, especially during the 1990s. Nevertheless, each territory in the region presented its own unique challenge, since, for example, kissing couldn't be shown in India, and in Indonesia no violence is allowed on screen. Today's challenge, according to Diaz, is represented by territories such as Italy, Turkey and Greece. As far as Africa is concerned, the continent is a Babel of languages, key channels are government-controlled and there are



Scriptwriter Delia Fiallo was in attendance. A total of 33 panelists participated in Cumbre

too few commercial TV outlets.

Peruvian TV director Dan Relayze Gerhardt illustrated the Peruvian experience with telenovela production that began in 1959. "During the initial period," explained Gerhardt, "they became very popular, but later their popularity declined. Today, however, the Peruvian public is rediscovering the genre and stations are broadcasting up to five telenovelas per day."

Mexican TV director Jorge Rios Villanuevas pointed out that those who publicly say that they only watch news and sports are, in reality, all telenovela viewers.

But telenovelas weren't the only topic being discussed at the event. At times, the equally interesting conversations fell outside the scheduled program. For example MGM Networks' Marcelo Coltro spoke about *En Busca De La Nueva Diva*, a reality show that searches for the next diva or *estrella* (star).

The *Cumbre* is a creation out of the fertile mind of *TV Mas'* Amanda Ospina, who tenaciously and, at times single-handedly, managed to bring it to its ninth edition. The *Cumbre* began in 2003 right here in Miami, in the very same location where the 2011 edition was held. After its inaugural year, it took place in Spain (two years in Madrid and two in Barcelona); Buenos Aires, Argentina; Bogotá, Colombia, and in 2010 it was held in Lima, Perú. This year, the *Cumbre* returned to its birthplace in Miami where, curiously, it honored the same person whom it honored in 2003. The awards were

*Although it's a relatively small event in comparison to other markets such as NATPE, the Cumbre brings to light new challenges facing Latin America's most celebrated serialized dramas and offers top-level Latin TV industry executives the unique opportunity to mingle in a cozy environment — a rare treat despite their close proximity to one another.*

cleverly dubbed "The Delia Fiallo Awards." Participants witnessed a very heartwarming and emotional ceremony recognizing this living giant of the telenovela industry.

Although it's a relatively small event in comparison to other markets such as NATPE, the *Cumbre* brings to light new challenges facing Latin America's most celebrated serialized dramas and offers top-level Latin TV industry executives the unique opportunity to mingle in a cozy environment — a rare treat despite their close proximity to one another.

Ospina, a former telenovela actor-turned-publisher, is not known for her meticulous organizational skills, and even though each *Cumbre* is often considered the result of a miracle, the fact remains that her devotion and dedication to the Latin American TV industry — and telenovelas in particular — are well appreciated by participants and sponsors alike. Many may at first resent her persistent sales pitches, but ultimately they relent and let Ospina be Ospina, helping her *Cumbre* succeed.

*VideoAge* has never been involved in *Cumbre's* event structure or organization, but over the years it's been one of the few international TV trade publications to give Ospina its support, reporting on the summit's outcomes. ●

*Claudia Romani contributed to this report from Miami.*

## ATF's Latin Presence

(Continued from Cover)

producers and distributors began scaling down their ATF participation and sending junior executives to the three-day market, which begins on December 7 this year.

At the market's zenith, there were over 20 Latin stands, which amounted to 22 percent of the total, in addition to those from Spanish and Portuguese companies. Now, Latin distribution companies constitute approximately 5.5 percent of the ATF exhibition stands, occupying only five out of a total of 90 stands. The companies are: Azteca from Mexico, Colombia's Caracol, Brazil's Globo TV International, Latin Media from Florida and Miami-based Televisa Internacional.

The aforementioned companies attended the event last year as well, but the numbers have decreased by one since 2010, since Telemundo Internacional, which participated in 2010, opted not to make the trip to Singapore this year. In 2009, seven Latin companies exhibited at the ATF, including Argentina's Telefe Internacional. There were no Latin buyers registered for this year's event at press time.

*VideoAge* caught up with some of the Latin distribution companies planning to set up shop at the ATF this year to gauge their expectations for the market.

Azteca has been attending for the past 11 years (the market is only in its 12th year). This December, Martha Contreras, Sales Asia, Comarex/Azteca will be in Singapore along with Comarex's CEO, Marcel Vinay. Contreras noted that ATF is a valuable market because it gives the company the "opportunity to meet with all the key players in the region." She added, "Over the years we have established an important business relationship in several countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. We are always looking to target and work in new territories."

And they will certainly have a chance to interact with Asian buyers. Reed Exhibitions' Yeow Hui Leng, Project director of ATF 2011, noted that organizers are "pleased to host group delegations from China, Finland, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, Taiwan, France and Spain this year." She continued, "We are also seeing increased buyer participation from [countries in] the region including Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong Kong [and] Taiwan, with new entries such as Myanmar, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and New Zealand."





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## ATF's Latin Presence

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Azteca's Contreras expects to build on the company's success, "secure new territories, and keep our presence growing in the region."

According to Leng, the most popular genres sold at the ATF are animation and children's programs because they are "universal in appeal...rising above language and cultural differences." She also noted that, "Next on the list will be dramas. With their soft and easy-to-digest content, they have wide support among the general Asian viewers. Formats, which can be easily adapted across borders into successful local programs, also remain popular among our buyers."

That's where many Latin distributors tend to fit in, due to their large supply of telenovelas. Azteca's Contreras offered proof of Leng's statement regarding telenovelas and formats: "The reality show *La Academia*, a singing contest in search [of] the next pop idol, has been produced all over Southeast Asia with excellent results and is still going very strong. Also the series *What Women Keep In Silence* (*Lo Que Callamos Las Mujeres*) has had a long run in Asia and is produced locally in countries like Malaysia and Indonesia."

In terms of new product, Azteca is looking to capitalize on the popularity of telenovelas in the region, and will introduce the following telenovelas to Asia for the first time: *Under a Red Sky* (*Cielo Rojo*) and *Empress* (*Emperatriz*). The company is also presenting its newest telenovela, *Trading Lives* (*Huerfanas*).

Like Azteca, Latin Media Corporation is also sending two executives: Managing directors Jose Escalante and Farid K. Ahmad. Escalante, who has



Azteca's Martha Contreras

already attended ATF with Latin Media twice, but has personally participated in the market on many other occasions, characterized the ATF as "a booming market for the television industry." He told *VideoAge* that the Asian market is "coming up with new and refreshing formats" and "adapting telenovelas in [their] purest traditional form." Escalante went on to say, "Production is in full swing in this part of the world, and therefore, in the telenovela genre, we can learn from them and offer our successful formats as well."

He is looking to sell a host of telenovelas, including *Pushovers*; *She, the Taxi Driver*; *Cholito*; *Bola Cinta*; *Pessona Kassih* and *First Lady*. In addition, Latin Media's slate will include a number of series such as *Back to Me*, *Life After Life* and reality show *Year Zero*.

"The telenovela format is selling very well. Series and animations are also becoming strong in the area," said Escalante.

He and his company will be targeting major Asian markets, including Singapore, Malaysia, China, South Korea, Japan, Indonesia, the Philippines and UEA, just to name a few. "All the markets are important, because in the

*In addition to being Asia's media hub, Singapore's officials are striving to make the city-state appealing for technical facilities and services, and offering financial incentives to producers and distributors for their productions.*

end, you have to place your product," Escalante explained.

Colombia's Caracol will send only one executive. Roberto Corrente, Sales executive for Eastern Europe and Asia, reported that the company is "targeting not only our consolidated Asian territories, but we are also aiming to expand our presence in this region by exploring, connecting and understanding each territory's content needs." Caracol has attended ATF since 2005, and Corrente has found that "For us, the genre [that] sells best in the region is without a doubt classical drama." However, he noted that "as viewers' tastes are evolving, we are also witnessing preferences moving towards a more 'down to earth drama,' closer to our audience's real day-to-day lives, in which there is always space for humor and laughs." He remarked that a similar switch occurred in Latin America 10 years ago.

To meet Asian audiences' programming desires, Corrente will be at the market with a number of telenovelas and series on display, including telenovelas *The Secretary* (*El Secretario*) and *Yellow Team* (*Los Canarios*) and series *Broken Promises* (*La Promesa*) and *Infiltrated* (*Infiltrados*). Expectations for these products are high, as Corrente said the company hopes to, "above everything else... 'surprise' our clients, and to move our viewers with productions that won't leave anyone indifferent."

Globo TV International's Raphael Correa Netto, head of International

Sales, noted that the pay-TV market in Asia is growing, and it's not surprising that, like the other Latin distributors, the company is "continuing to bet big on the telenovelas *Passione* and *Cat's Cradle*," which will be on display at the market.

Globo TV has been attending the ATF for over six years, and will send two executives this year. Correa Netto said the company has found that the market provides "a chance for relationship building, to search for an ever-deepening understanding of the countries, clients, culture and mainly the market." He went on to say, "We're consolidating ourselves more and more in South Korea, Macau, Timor and Singapore, and looking for growth opportunities in India, Japan, China and Australia."

According to ATF organizer Reed Exhibitions' Leng, over 850 companies from more than 53 countries attended the ATF in 2010, representing a 15 percent increase in the number of participating companies compared to the year before. This year, organizers expect to draw 3,500 attendees.

In addition to being Asia's media hub, Singapore's officials are striving to make the city-state appealing for technical facilities and services, and are offering financial incentives to producers and distributors for their productions. A good number of Western media companies maintain offices in Singapore, including NBC Universal.

This year, ATF will be held at the Sands Expo and Convention Centre at Marina Bay Sands for the first time. This marks the third venue change in the market's history. The theme for 2011 is: "Evolve, Explore and Experience." ●



Off the Fence's Tony Chow, Health & Lifestyle Channel's Robert Chua



VideoAge presence at ATF



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## Rob the Robot **in HD**

This 3D Animated Series transports children aged 4 to 6 to the Robot Galaxy where they explore amazing worlds, solving puzzles and problems with Rob and his friends. Each episode features a fun new planet, and a fantastic mission for Rob and his friends. The series encourages young viewers to explore and have fun while they learn. Rob is a natural leader who steers his rocket off to new and exciting planets where every day leads to fun and games.

**Produced by:** One Animation and Amberwood Entertainment  
**Genre:** 3D Animated TV Series  
**Format:** 52 episodes x 11 mins  
**Language:** English, French & Spanish  
**Email:** phillip@oneanimation.com  
**Tel:** +65 6273 1785



## 365 Dishes **in HD**

A look into every country's street food culture through the eyes of Ash – an Egyptian with a huge appetite. Speaking in his mother tongue, Ash attempts to bridge the gap between the world's food and his Arabic roots.

**Produced by:** The Creative Room  
**Genre:** Food Travelogue  
**Format:** 13 episodes x 30 mins  
**Language:** Arabic  
**Email:** ric@thecreativeroom.net  
**Tel:** +65 9619 5095



## The Adventures of Bradley and Friends **in HD**

*The Adventures of Bradley and Friends* is a CGI animated, pre-school series that follows the adventures of a lively young boy on his travels to story worlds from around the globe. When Bradley turns the pop-up pages of his favourite bedtime book, they magically transform into an accessible world. Bradley is no longer simply reading a story: he and Plane are flying within it! Once landed, Bradley and Plane meet new friends, see different lands, and rise to exciting challenges.

**Produced by:** Red Kite Animations Ltd – An August Media Holdings Enterprise  
**Genre:** 2D Animated TV Series  
**Format:** 10 episodes x 60 mins  
**Language:** English  
**Distribution:** August Media Holdings – All Rights Worldwide  
**Email:** info@redkite-animation.com  
**Tel:** +65 6592 0577



## Hidden Cities **in HD** **360° ONLINE**

In and around Asia's most bustling cities lay hidden worlds filled with forgotten palaces and temples, abandoned towns and disused underground fortresses that shelter unbelievable relics and untold stories. *Hidden Cities* covers Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, China and Taiwan. With the help of local experts that include writers, historians, archaeologists and scientists, presenter Anthony Morse attempts to investigate and unearth these places, and reveal the tales they have hidden for so long.

**Produced by:** Beach House Pictures  
**Genre:** History  
**Format:** 12 episodes x 60 mins  
**Language:** English  
**TX:** History Channel  
**Distribution:** AETN International  
**Email:** roger.cheng@beachhousepictures.com  
**Tel:** +65 6236 9574



## Tocori the Ghost

*Tocori the Ghost* is a story that takes place in a mysterious mansion, where the world of a boy and the world of Tocori meet. Each time the boy visits the mansion, he goes on an adventure with Tocori and other ghost friends that live there. Through these adventures, the boy is exposed to different cultures, customs and values. The story goes through 50 elaborate episodes to highlight the boy's new discoveries and growth as a young adult. It hopes to engage the viewers to explore and bring back their curiosity of the unknown and the flexibility to accept the differences.

**Produced by:** Drawiz Inc. & Sparky Animation  
**Genre:** Fantasy (Educational & Exploration for New Discoveries in Children)  
**Format:** 50 episodes x 5 mins  
**Language:** English  
**Email:** d.shirasawa@drawiz.co.jp/  
yinping@drawiz.co.jp  
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## Miami Success

(Continued from Cover)

Fontainebleau, a sprawling Miami Beach venue, for the second year in a row. The hope is that the hotel will become a permanent home for the event, provided NATPE manages to keep costs down. As it is, TV executives are complaining that organizers are milking exhibitors with added expenditures, capitalizing on the renewed success of the market, but blaming those expenditures on the hotel's increased costs.

The 2011 edition of the market boasted 4,500 attendees, including 702 buyers. The move to Miami boosted overall participation by adding about 1,000 participants, which, some observed, went a long way toward reviving the ailing market. The influx of attendees included not only broader participation from Latin America, but also the return of many Europeans who had opted out of the market in recent years. Organizers predicted this trend will continue at the 2012 market, as new companies from previously under-represented regions such as France, India, Iran, Turkey and a number of African countries, have already registered.

The success of NATPE 2011 was widely attributed to the change of venue. After several markets in Las Vegas, NATPE set up shop in Miami for the third time, including the 1994 event. And although, for the most part, things ran smoothly, there were still a few kinks to work out. Long lines at the elevator banks in the Tresor Tower, which housed the suites, held up a number of meetings and, at times, trapped some participants in the stacked elevators. Meanwhile, the stands exhibition, located far away from the Tresor, wanted for foot traffic, to the detriment of the small and medium sized companies that opted for booths.

This time around, organizers have ironed out the bumps in the road with a handful of strategies. NATPE's president Rick Feldman summed up the general attitude toward the market



best: "We love it, it's fantastic. Get those elevators fixed." Feldman added that organizers are working on ways to logistically handle the even bigger crowd that is expected in 2012. One such tactic involves cutting down the number of exhibitors in the Tresor Tower by about half and distributing suites among the hotel's three other towers. "It'll be more balanced," said Feldman, "it should make the elevator issues a lot less of a problem."

Indeed, this year the major U.S. studios will be scattered among the four towers with Fox at the Sorrento, CBS at the Chateau, NBC Universal and Warner Bros. at the Versailles, Sony Pictures at the Marina like last year, and Disney at the Tresor. This allocation will bring much needed relief to the Tresor, especially considering the increased presence of the studios, which, in the case of NBC Universal, will occupy an entire floor of the Versailles Tower.

Yet, most of the telenoveleros will remain at the Tresor, with only Televisa opting for the conference facility next to the registration and floor areas. Other distributors will be using stands on the exhibition floor. In total, over 250 companies are expected to exhibit.

Where the conference program is concerned, participants can expect a streamlined schedule, with an emphasis on business. Feldman stated, "Some people think we do too much. So we cut down on what we're doing at lunchtime, so people don't feel conflicted. We're going to take a 'less is more' approach." However, seminars, panels and keynotes will focus on content creation, distribution and financing for multiple platforms, as usual.

Mayra Bracer, Latin America Television Sales executive at New York-based A+E Networks, was enthusiastic about the market. She and her team had a positive experience at the 2011 event. "I loved it last year," she said, "It was a nicer venue to be in, particularly for my market. Everyone was in a really good mood and it felt like a really comfortable setting." On the elevator situation, Bracer was pragmatic. "It is an unfortunate reality that the hotels are not designed to handle that many people," she said. "The suite format

of NATPE is very good for us, the distributors. It requires a lot less setup and is very comfortable. But I do feel for the buyers. It would ultimately be good for everyone to figure out a better solution."

Lia Dolente, manager of International Sales & Publicity at Toronto-based Tricon Films and Television, said the company will be using the market to "establish and foster relationships in Latin America and the U.S., which are both key markets for Tricon." She added, "It's also a very good market for introducing new programming." Dolente expressed satisfaction with last year's market, but also looked forward to this year's improvements. "We [attended] last year," she said, "and NATPE has made a number of key changes this year to improve the 'growing pains' of moving to Miami, a move we are very happy with." Additionally, noted Dolente, "We find it to be a slightly less hectic and more casual market, offering more opportunities for impromptu meetings with potential buyers, unlike the larger markets where meetings need to be planned months in advance. Also, as there are generally fewer international broadcasters in attendance at NATPE, we can focus on our U.S. and Latin American relationships."

For Los Angeles-based Eyeworks Distribution, 2011 marked the company's first foray at NATPE. Ted Bookstaver, the firm's director of International Sales, said the market "proved to be quite positive, and NATPE will definitely be in our long-term plans." Asked to suggest advancements for this year's event, Bookstaver noted, "better consolidation of the buyer/distributor population is never a bad idea, especially for a three-day market with 30-minute meeting slots."

Bookstaver and his team plan to use NATPE to finalize deals begun at MIPCOM. "The timing of NATPE is great in that regard," he said, adding, "we also hope to continue extending Eyeworks' global reach by establishing and fortifying relationships with clients that we might not see in Cannes, such as those from several Latin American territories."

Naturally, Latin American distributors will be out in full force at NATPE 2012. Cesar Diaz, vice president of Sales at Miami-based Venevision International,



said of the market, "NATPE has always been a top contender on our list of conventions that we attend each year. As it takes place early in the year, this market is ideally suited for us to introduce our Latin American clientele to our lineup of new products for the year."

As for improvements to the 2012 event, Diaz, like many, mentioned the elevators. "However," he noted, "the [2011] event itself was a major success in as far as meetings, social events, and networking were concerned. No doubt having the convention in a tropical setting such as Miami was a welcome change of pace from Las Vegas. The only other perfect idea would be to have everyone and every activity under one big roof — much like the good old days of the one convention floor when all exhibitors used display booths."

Attendees can expect a bustling market. Parties in the suites and throughout Miami Beach will be plentiful. Social events will also include, as usual, NATPE's Brandon Tartikoff Legacy Award, honoring excellence in television leadership, and an accompanying gala on Tuesday, day two of the market. This year, NATPE will honor FremantleMedia North America's CEO Cecile Frot-Coutaz; Fernando Gaitán, VP of Production and Content for RCN TV; Dennis Swanson, president of Station Operations for FOX Television Stations; and Matthew Weiner, creator and executive producer of *Mad Men* as recipients of the Tartikoff Award. Additionally, the NATPE Digital Luminary Awards will be followed by a champagne toast on Wednesday. The Luminary Awards, now in its third year, acknowledges the innovative people and companies who are catalysts in the content revolution. Honoree suggestions were accepted up until November 4, and honorees were chosen from those suggestions as well as those made by the NATPE staff. NATPE will announce the honorees in mid-December. The market will kick off with a pre-opening party on Sunday, sponsored by Venevision. The NATPE-organized opening party will follow on Monday, while other parties are in the works. ●







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## LAM Local Production

(Continued from Cover)

said that, “Fox has entered into this [LAM local production] business this year having in full production the Colombian version of *Wonder Years*, a pilot of *Dharma & Greg*, a contract on *How I Met Your Mother*, and is in negotiation for other shows.” At present, Fox productions are for local networks, and genres consist of comedies and dramas from original scripts only, while Fox’s formats are now handled by Shine International.

Wahba also explained that, “Fox for now is not in the co-production business, but may be in the future.” All of Fox’s local productions are completed in Latin America in the country that has acquired them. If they are for a Spanish-language country, the accent used is neutral. Dubbing is used if needed. On the other hand, talent is selected by the network and presented to Fox for approval and/or suggestions.

Wahba expects “finished products to travel at least throughout Latin America and the U.S. Hispanic world, but we feel that the adaptations can have good reception in other parts of the world, too.”

A Sony Pictures Television (SPT) spokesperson reported that, “To date we have focused on quality, long-form scripted content production. We have also committed ourselves to light entertainment production throughout the region. Currently, Floresta [SPT’s São Paulo, Brazil-based company] is producing a local version of the U.S. talk show *The Dr. Oz Show*, which was recently extended for an additional 44 episodes following its successful debut in Brazil.”

Additionally, SPT’s Floresta and



Claudio Villarruel, co-founder of ON-TV



Sheila Aguirre, SVP, Sales and Development, Latin America and Hispanic USA for FremantleMedia

Brazilian network Band TV signed a three-year co-production deal to produce three primetime sitcoms that will premiere on Band. Floresta will produce the co-productions, and the first sitcom scheduled to be made is a local version of U.S. hit comedy *The Nanny*. The 180 episodes of the series will air Monday through Friday next year. The remaining two co-productions will be either local versions of formats from SPT’s scripted format catalogue, or original productions. After running on CBS in the U.S. for six years, local versions of *The Nanny* have been produced in nine countries, including Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico and Russia.

As for genres, SPT is making a strong push toward “teleseries,” an emerging genre combining storytelling elements from both novelas and series into daily shows with a 60-to-90-episode run, while also focusing on sitcoms, classic novelas, dramedies or straight drama series. On the unscripted side, SPT continues to develop successful formats in the region, including *Dancing Nation* in Brazil. Productions are generated both from formats and original scripts and are mostly for local networks.

SPT’s spokesperson explained that, “Our local LAM productions are primarily produced in Latin America. The region offers an unbeatable mix of talent — both behind and in front of the camera — competitive cost structures, inquisitive producers, infinitely variable landscapes and cityscapes, and, most importantly, broadcasters committed to the best possible storytelling.” She also added that, “there are tremendous opportunities for co-productions in the region. Building on our successful relationship with Caracol Televisión in Colombia, we recently signed a three-year co-production agreement, combining our expertise in creating and producing high-quality Spanish-language telenovelas and teleseries and distributing them around the world. Some of our most popular shows such as *Amar y Temer*, (Caracol), *Rosario Tijeras* (Telefuturo) and *La Pola* (RCN)

are co-productions.”

Since 2006, five versions of Disney Media Networks Latin America’s *Desperate Housewives*, or *Amas De Casa Desesperadas*, have been produced in the region. The Argentinean version is broadcast in Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay; the Colombian and Ecuadorian versions air in Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama, and have been sold to Japan; the U.S. Hispanic version is broadcast in the U.S., Mexico, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic; and the Brazilian version (*Donas De Casa Desesperadas*) airs in Portuguese in Brazil.

Early this year, DMNLA signed a three-year agreement with Turner Broadcasting System for the third season of *The Amazing Race* for TBS’s SPACE channel. Based in Argentina, SPACE carries the reality show exclusively for all of Latin America. *The Amazing Race* was first produced for Discovery Channel.

Additionally, an adaptation of Disney-ABC’s *Grey’s Anatomy*, titled *Corazón Abierto*, was made for Colombia’s RCN, and DMNLA produced *Millionario*, the Latin version of *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire* for Mexico’s Azteca 7. Plus, an adaptation of Touchstone’s classic sitcom *The Golden Girls* has been produced in Venezuela. Called *Los Años Dorados*, it airs on cable and broadcast TV throughout Latin America. A second version, *Las Chicas de Oro*, was produced for Spain’s TVE and was also broadcast in Latin America.

Leonardo Aranguibel and Fernando Barbosa serve as executive producers for DMNLA.

Sheila Aguirre, SVP, Sales and Development, Latin America and Hispanic USA for FremantleMedia said, “We’ve seen a great increase in the production of our formats across the region. FremantleMedia has a global network of production companies which includes Mexico and Brazil, and we work with broadcasters in other territories to ensure a high quality rollout of our shows all across Latin

America. In Mexico, for instance, we produce game shows like *Pokerface*, *Password* and others, while in Brazil we produce shows like *Idols*, which is now up to its sixth series, as well as *Project Runway* and *Password*. In Chile, we have *Take Me Out*, a second season of *Got Talent*, the premiere season of the *X Factor*, and seasons one and two of *My Name Is* on the way. *Got Talent* also aired a third season in Argentina and we have a growing number of programs on air elsewhere in the region.”

FME covers a wide range of formats, from musical to fashion design, art, and traditional game shows. “We have formats for all tastes and needs,” Aguirre added, expanding, “We work with pan-regional cable, and have a strong emphasis on local business. We produce in several territories including Brazil, Mexico and the U.S. In recent years we have worked mostly out of Latin America, but this year we produced *Project Runway* Latin America out of the U.S.”

Aguirre said that local LAM productions can also be co-productions and “a good example is *Idol* Puerto Rico, which we are co-producing with WAPA with great results. We look to make it the best local production possible — first and foremost, it must be successful in its original market.”

“Talent and participants use their native accents. It is important that local productions have local personalities,” Aguirre explained.

She went on to say, “We look for talent that makes great television. Where we license a format, rather than produce it, we do mandate approval over certain talent for specific formats. We are not necessarily looking for the ‘Latino Simon Cowell or Paula Abdul.’ We want to be sure that the talent is right for the role, and that he or she brings something uniquely special to the program. We want to ensure that the talent chosen has the right expertise to carry out the role with credibility. We need to be certain that when they are brought together, all talent on the program creates the right environment — whether it is camaraderie, rivalry or otherwise, they need that driving force where they can play off of each other and have good rapport.”

Finally, when *VideoAge* asked if local LAM productions travel well across various territories as finished products, Aguirre answered, “In general, we do not distribute the local versions across territories, but it really does depend on the product, and in some cases they do travel. For example, the Mexican and U.S. Spanish-language versions of *Family Feud* traveled well. Likewise, the Argentine productions generally travel to Uruguay.”

Eddy Ruiz, EVP and general manager of A+E Ole Network said that, “We continue to increase year to year the number of original production hours that

(Continued on Page 26)  
DECEMBER 2011



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## LAM Local Production

(Continued from Page 24)

we produce in the region. The amount of hours varies by network. Our ability to program our networks by feed gives us the flexibility to segment our programming to individual countries or regions."

Ruiz added that genres vary by network, "For History we produce documentaries, reality type competition, docu-drama, travel and others. For A+E we are producing crime/police unscripted, scripted drama, realities such as *Intervention*, *Hoarders* and now our latest production out of Mexico,



Eddy Ruiz, EVP and general manager of A+E Ole Network

*El Luchador*. This is a reality series based on the day-to-day life of four well known 'Lucha Libre' [wrestling] personalities.

On Bio we produce biographies and other formats such as *I Survived*. In addition to these genres of programming, we produce web exclusive content for all of our productions."

Ruiz also explained, "the majority of our productions are intended for the entire region, but others are market-specific," and that productions are generated from a combination of formats from A+E Networks or others, as well as original scripted and non-scripted series. He then added: "We have our production team based out of Buenos Aires. All of our productions are produced locally in the region, not in the U.S.

"We do casting calls in search of new talent or depending on the production, we may decide to go after a locally recognizable individual that fits the product and the targeted demographic... [and] we do make an effort to use as



Elie Wahba, SVP Latin America & Caribbean for 20th Century Fox Distribution

neutral a Spanish as possible," he said.

In terms of co-production, Ruiz said, "We have done numerous co-productions. We have in place a number of agreements with local production houses that co-produce product for us." However, when asked if local LAM productions travel well as finished products, he answered: "In my experience it has been very difficult to find local productions that travel well throughout the region. The first major hurdle in our territory is Brazil. Not only is there a language difference, but a cultural difference as well. Then you add the cultural differences between Mexico and, say, Argentina or even Chile, and the chances of success diminish."

LAM's local production is now open to indie producers as well. Claudio Villarruel, a former in-house producer for Telefe, is the co-founder of ON-TV, a Buenos Aires-based independent production company that has seen success with various programming genres. He is also in charge of the content for 360tv, one of the first digital channels to air in Argentina.

"The core of our production is drama. We have been producing series (13 episodes) and telenovelas (60-150 episodes) [in recent] years," said Villarruel, adding, "*Our Contra las Cuerdas* (*Against The Ropes*) has been nominated for best telenovela at the International Emmy Awards. A local version of *Against The Ropes* is being produced in Colombia. We have also produced game shows like *3,2,1 Win*, whose local version is now on the air in Colombia," he said.

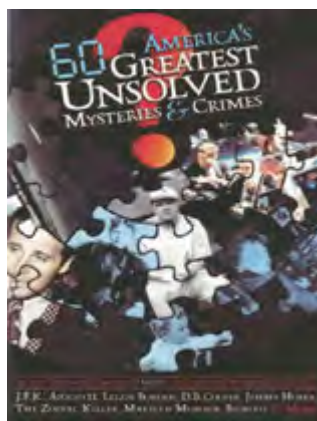
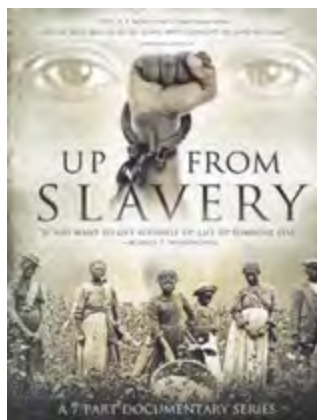
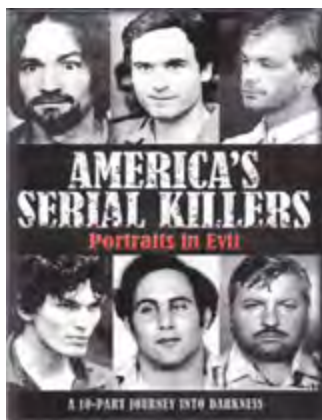
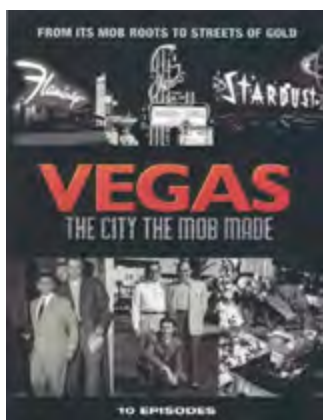
Villarruel explained that, right now ON-TV's main focus is on local networks, with programs produced in Latin America that can also travel across the region as finished product.

As far as the type of Spanish accent his productions use, Villarruel stated, "We produce with the Spanish accent of the country where we produce and select local talent, based on the story we want to tell." ●



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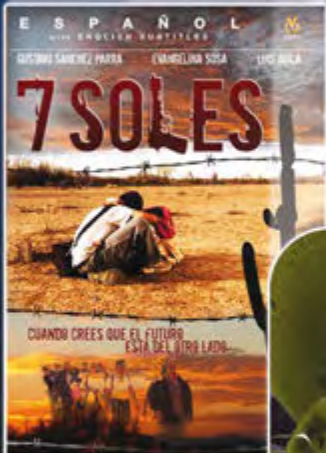
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# Conferences & Events News

## TRAVELERS GET NO RESPECT

A recent survey found that U.S. business executives rank rude hotel staff, intrusive security procedures and "steerage-like treatment" on crowded planes as the worst aspects of traveling for business, but it's even worse for the "chicken or pasta" crowd.

Asked to pick the things they hate most about travel, 86 percent of travelers said airport security screenings, 76 percent checked dirty commercial planes and 74 percent said impersonal treatment by the staff, according to a survey of about 3,000 business executives by Vitesse Worldwide, an executive travel firm in Connecticut.

Hotel rates and airfares have been climbing for several months, with travel demand on the rise and airlines cutting capacity by eliminating routes and retiring older planes. And those prices are likely to keep rising.

Average airfares and hotel rates will jump as much as five percent in 2012, according to a survey of more than 300 travel managers by the Global Business Travel Assn., a Virginia trade group for travel managers.

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**A**llow me to explain why print media will survive the test of time. I'll do so with two personal anecdotes. Years ago, before launching *VideoAge*, I was the International Editor of *Television/RadioAge*, one of the first U.S. trade publications for the entertainment industry, created in New York City by the legendary Sol J. Paul in 1953 and closed in 1989.

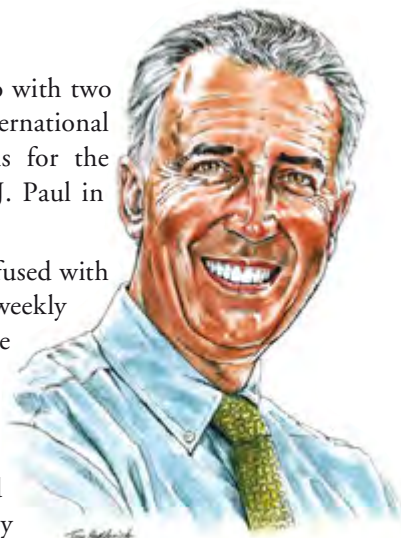
The publication came out twice a month (a biweekly, which is often confused with a bimonthly, which comes out every other month), and competed with the weekly *Variety* in New York, *Broadcasting* in Washington D.C., *AdvertisingAge* in Chicago, and the daily *The Hollywood Reporter* in Los Angeles.

*TV/RadioAge* was considered the "bible" of the radio and television industry. It covered every single aspect of the various sectors, including advertising, spot sales, national sales, production, ratings, legislature, syndication, trade shows, international television and more — over 20 sectors, each with many topics to cover. Plus, Paul insisted that every article had to be detailed. This resulted in a publication that averaged 180 pages per issue. It was literally the size of a bible! Yes, everything was there — the magazine contained every single bit of information, but was too heavy to carry, and too time-consuming to read.

It was around 1979 that I reported to Paul that the entertainment executives whom he'd sent me to interview in their offices had copies of *TV/RadioAge* piled up on their desks, each with several bookmarks indicating important stories to read when the time allowed.

The problem — I was told — was that the extra time never came and other important news overlapped, resulting in an old pile of copies of *TV/RadioAge* that was quickly disposed of — with only a few of the hundreds of published articles actually read — and replaced with a new pile.

Just about that time, a new weekly publication was launched from New York and Chicago: *Electronic Media*,\* published



by the folks at *AdvertisingAge*. *EM* was a skinny, tabloid-format (*VideoAge*'s size) trade that used to make Paul chuckle for its superficiality. But what Paul did not understand was that, just by scanning *EM*'s headlines and reading a few paragraphs, executives could gather the most important news of the week. Granted, the *EM* journalists did not know the industry as well as those at *TV/RadioAge*, but the *EM* editors were smart enough to show busy readers that their publication contained the few essential news stories.

Now on to the second anecdote. Earlier this year, *VideoAge* was approached by the promotion executives at Argentina's Telefilms to explore the possibility of reporting on their 50th anniversary. We promptly offered a series of online features that were just as promptly rejected in favor of a print report (which goes online anyway).

And this is the essence of why print media will

resist a Web tsunami. Not only is an online report perceived as having less commercial value than a printed one, but the Web has now become a sort of *TV/RadioAge* of the Internet: Too much information to digest, too time-consuming to read, too confusing to follow, too fast-changing to appreciate and too cheap to value.

On the other hand, when you have a print copy of *VideoAge* (or any other similarly informative trade) in your hand, you can be assured that those few, short printed stories will give you a picture of what is most important. We never abuse your time or make our publication difficult to read or carry, and, at trade shows, we publish dailies that require even less time to scan.

Nowadays, time is a commodity: Costly, hard to come by and difficult to manage. This is why a Web-style *TV/RadioAge* will not — at least in the short run — replace a print *EM*-style publication.

\* If you're wondering why *EM* eventually closed, the answer is twofold: First, their advertising universe fell with deregulation, consolidation and the resulting elimination of the syndication market in the U.S., and, second, the publication was never able to expand internationally.

Dom Serafini



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A black and white close-up portrait of a man with dark hair and eyes, wearing a suit and tie. The image is the background for the top two-thirds of the page.

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CONTENT FIRST

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